
SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 21 (2) Transportation Distances; Section 190 Transportation; Section 265 Duties of Principal: Care of Pupils; Section 286 Duties of Supervisory Officers: Supervise Business Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools Section 23 (4) Pupils Responsible to Principal for Conduct on a School Bus; Public Vehicles Act; Highway Traffic Act*

Related References: *Administrative Procedure 175 Accidents, Incidents and Occupational Illnesses; AP 177 School Emergency Procedures; AP 178 Inclement Weather; AP 180 Medical Emergencies (Code Blue) and First Aid; AP 266 Field Trips and Excursions; AP 305 School Attendance Areas; AP 307 Safe Arrival: Elementary Schools; AP 314 Medically at Risk Students (Including But Not Limited to Anaphylactic Students); AP 315 Medication: Oral Administration; AP 350 Code of Conduct; AP 358 Student Suspension; AP 500 Budget Development and Implementation; AP 525 Video Surveillance; AP 560 Insurance, Property and Liability Form 589A Request for Transportation Based on Permanent or Temporary Medical Condition; Form 589B School Bus Incident Report*

1. Safe and Reliable Transportation

- 1.1 Avon Maitland District School Board provides safe and reliable transportation, within the financial resources available, for certain students within the jurisdiction of the board.
- 1.2 Broad parameters for implementation are identified below.

2. Implementation**2.1 Walking Distances****2.1.1 Urban**

Transportation may be provided to students from their designated bus stop to and from school, within the home attendance boundary, for distances measured by the nearest highway, street, road or registered walkway to the school, whose registered residence from the school campus exceeds the following guidelines::

- (a) 1.6 kilometres for students in JK/K to Grade 8; or
4.8 kilometres for students in Grade 9 – 12

- 2.1.1.1 For elementary pupils residing in small rural centres where no public school exists, pupils may be required to walk a distance up to 1.6 kilometres to reach pick up points.

2.1.2 Rural

- 2.1.2.1 For elementary pupils residing in rural areas, the maximum walking distance from gate to school bus stop is 0.4 km.

- 2.1.2.2 For secondary pupils residing in rural areas the maximum walking distance from gate to school bus stop is 0.8 km.

2.1.3 District Exceptions

Reduced distances may be implemented for the following exceptions as determined by the director of education or designate:

- (a) Poor road conditions;
- (b) The absence of safe “turnarounds”; and/or
- (c) Limiting one-way bus rides to one hour or less wherever possible.

2.1.4 All of the above terms and conditions shall also apply to return trips after school closes for the day.

2.2 **Kindergarten Pupils**

Transportation of kindergarten students to or from school or their homes during the noon period will not be provided by the board except for any service granted under Section 2.3 of this procedure, “Transportation for Special Education Students”.

2.3 **Early Learning Program Pupils**

Transportation of early learning students (in designated early learning classes) to or from school is consistent with all of the above terms and conditions.

2.4 **Transportation for Special Education Students**

2.4.1 Most exceptional students are able to travel on regular bus routes to and from school. Special transportation to and from school may be provided to identified pupils upon approval of the director of education or designate provided that their exceptionality prevents them from using regular transportation as provided by the board. Students who require special vehicles to accommodate their wheel chairs are transported together whenever possible to reduce travel costs.

2.4.2 When arrangements for transporting exceptional students to and from school are being made, consideration must be given to:

- (a) Safety (for them and for others);
- (b) The physical capability of the student, including any students [exceptional or not] who have a temporary physical disability as a result of an injury suffered at school or on a school-sanctioned event;
- (c) behavioural or developmental capability of the student;
- (d) Distance to the school;
- (e) Length of time the student is on the bus;
- (f) Use of existing bus routes; and
- (g) Sharing bus routes with the coterminous board.

2.5 **Integration of Elementary and Secondary Students**

Where it is practical and economical, secondary school pupils and elementary school pupils will be transported on the same bus.

2.6 **Route Limitations**

2.6.2 The maximum permissible number of transportation routes under the control, whether directly or indirectly, of a single student transportation operator shall not exceed 49% of the total routes available.

2.6.3 The director and board shall be notified prior to any change of control of any operator. If the result of such change of control of an operator would be to have more than 49% of the total routes of the district under the control of a single student transportation operator, the board may decline to renew or extend contracts with that operator until the number of routes under the control of that operator is reduced such that it does not exceed 49% of the total routes of the district.

3. **Administrative Procedures**

The following procedures provide guidelines for the manager of transportation, principals and other staff members for various transportation decisions.

3.1 **Route Scheduling**

Transportation routes will be structured in such a manner that:

3.1.1 Contract bus routes are established by the manager of transportation and the contractor and, upon request, with the principal.

3.1.2 Arrival/departure times are established by the manager of transportation in consultation with district administration, school personnel, and administrative procedures and practices.

3.2 **Special Request for Transportation**

3.2.1 The board may provide home-to-school and return transportation services for its eligible students on a daily basis in accordance with Section 190 of the *Education Act*, which states in part that a board may provide transportation for pupils “to and from the school that the pupil attends” and “to and from any activity that is part of the program of such school”.

3.2.2 Notwithstanding the above, schools receive many special requests for transportation. Accommodating these requests may increase the payment size of the vehicle contracted, alter the existing route or require additional stops, and cannot be considered.

- 3.2.3 However, if there is no additional expense, special transportation requests may be approved under the following conditions.

Where alternate transportation arrangements are requested by a parent/guardian, the following procedures will apply:

3.2.3.1 Where a short-term exemption from regular transportation service is required to an alternate residence due to parent absence, and space is available on the alternate vehicle to accommodate the student(s), the school principal has the authority to grant the request ensuring that such a request is obtained in writing from the custodial parent/guardian, the bus company is notified and correspondence is retained in file.

3.2.3.2 Where a long-term exemption from regular transportation is required to an alternate residence due to parent absence, the school principal will have the custodial parent/guardian complete the required form (Appendix A) and return it to the school for completion. The principal will forward the request to the manager of transportation where it will be reviewed and a decision made. The decision will be affixed to the application with necessary comments, and a copy will be returned to the principal. It will be the responsibility of the principal to inform the parent of the decision.

In accommodating requests of this nature, it is understood that arrangements should be consistent both morning and afternoon each school day and that the board is unable to:

- (a) Increase the size of the vehicle currently in use, alter existing routes, or add new stops in urban areas, and
- (b) Provide service for personal activities which do not form part of the school curriculum.
- (c) Provide transportation outside of the school attendance boundary where the child is registered.
- (d) Use two different carriers in the provision of regular and alternate transportation services.

3.3 **Procedures for Temporary Removal of Bus Riding Privilege**

The principal may delegate to a driver the authority for a one-way removal of bus privileges for specific reasons (e.g. habitual offenders); and it is understood that:

- 3.3.1 The principal retains ultimate responsibility for such action;
- 3.3.2 The driver shall not alter the regular drop-off point; and
- 3.3.3 The driver will advise the principal or delegate of such action as soon as possible.

3.3.4 **NOTE:** In an emergency situation not covered in the above procedures, the bus driver must make arrangements that are in the best interests of the safety and well being of the students. Alternate arrangements may include returning the bus to the school or calling for a supervisor to provide alternate transportation for a student. Bus drivers must contact the appropriate principal or vice-principal, as soon as possible. The safety of all passengers, the driver and other motorists shall be the first consideration when contemplating any action.

3.4 **Discipline: Student Transportation**

3.4.1 **Step 1:** Pupil warning by bus driver. If no improvement then,

3.4.2 **Step 2:** Pupil warning by principal and notification to parent/guardian. If no improvement then,

3.4.3 **Step 3:** Pupil and parent/guardian discussions with principal. The principal advises that if student behaviour does not improve, suspension of bus riding privileges will result. If no improvement then,

3.4.4 **Step 4:** Temporary removal of bus riding privileges by the principal. There shall be notification of student, parent(s) or guardian(s), if pupil is a minor, contractor, manager of transportation and the director of education. The principal will also telephone parent(s) or guardian(s) of pupils who are adults, if possible. If no improvement then,

3.4.5 **Step 5:** Long-term removal of bus riding privileges by the principal. There shall be written notification to parent(s) or guardian(s), if pupil is a minor, bus driver and the manager of transportation. This discipline will continue until the principal has been satisfied that appropriate bus behaviour will be followed.

3.4.6 **NOTE:** The principal may proceed to Step #4 immediately depending on the severity of the incident.

3.4.7 Form 589B School Bus Incident Report must be completed for each step. This report is a three-part form with the white copy to be retained at the school, the yellow copy to the bus driver and the pink copy to the transportation department.

3.5 **Transportation of Students in Privately-Owned Vehicles**

3.5.1 The use of private automobiles to transport students on school business is acceptable but discouraged. Teacher/adult/age-of majority and adult student drivers are covered by the board's liability insurance provided they are in possession of a valid driver's license. Such insurance coverage applies only beyond the coverage carried by the owner of the vehicle.

- 3.5.2 When private vehicles are to be used to transport students the following steps must be followed:
- 3.5.2.1 The drivers of such vehicles are approved by the principal and made aware of the responsibility they bear in assuming control and custody of other people's children;
 - 3.5.2.2 The responsibility for approving use of privately-owned motor vehicles rather than board-contracted buses to transport pupils on authorized school business rests with the principal;
 - 3.5.2.3 In making the decision to use privately-owned motor vehicles the principal must consider both the safety of pupils and the economics of that mode of transportation;
 - 3.5.2.4 Any private vehicle, with a seating capacity of up to seven passengers, which is used to transport students on behalf of the board, should carry a minimum Third Party Liability Insurance Limit of \$1,000,000. Teacher/adult/age-of-majority and adult student drivers shall be made aware that the automobile insurance carried by the owner of the vehicle will be primary coverage in the event of any claim. The board's non-owned auto insurance only applies to claims that exceed the liability limit carried by the vehicle owner;
 - 3.5.2.5 The owner's insurance company shall be informed that transportation of students may take place, voluntarily, from time-to-time;
 - 3.5.2.6 Adult student drivers must have prior written permission of the parent/guardian and must indicate that the vehicle is insured and the insurance company has been notified of the proposed transportation of students; and
 - 3.5.2.7 The parent/guardian has granted prior consent to permit a student to travel in a privately owned vehicle.
 - 3.5.2.8 **NOTE:** Under the *Highway Traffic Act*, a vehicle with a seating capacity of 6 or more (excluding the driver) being used to transport students on behalf of the board, for compensation, becomes a school purposes vehicle. If the vehicle is transporting between 6 and 9 passengers, the safety requirements for the vehicle change. If the vehicle is transporting 10 or more passengers, the licensing of the driver also changes. The manager of transportation shall be consulted before any arrangements are made in this context. The *Public Vehicles Act* defines "for compensation" as follows:
"compensation" includes any rate, remuneration, reimbursement

or reward of any kind paid, payable or promised, or received or demanded, directly or indirectly”.

3.5.2.9 Students enrolled in a co-operative education program are not covered by WSIB for travel to and from the training station. While the board's insurance coverage does apply to this travel, it is necessary to determine that the student driver does have both a valid driver's license and automobile insurance. Where such is not the case, principals must ensure that all parties involved know that the student is not to drive on school business, including to and from the work site.

3.6 **Transportation to and from Special Schools and Centres**

3.6.1 The Robarts School, Amethyst School, London and The W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford and Trillium School, Milton

3.6.1.1 When requested to do so by the parent or guardian of a resident pupil who ordinarily would have the right to attend a school under the jurisdiction of the board, the board will provide weekend or daily transportation to and from provincial and demonstration schools serving the area for a resident pupil registered at such a school.

3.6.2 **Other Institutions**

3.6.2.1 Upon approval of the director or designate, transportation will be provided by the board to a resident pupil who is enrolled and in attendance at:

- (a) An Ontario Hospital School; or
- (b) A Children's Mental Health Centre established under the *Children's Mental Health Centre Act*

3.7 **Video Cameras on Buses**

3.7.1 Procedure to Monitor Situations

3.7.1.1 When a particular route is being monitored, the cameras will be activated. Immediately after the completion of the route, the bus driver will deliver the videocassette to the school bus operator.

3.7.1.2 The school bus operator will view the video to ensure it is working properly prior to contacting the principal.

3.7.1.3 The principal or designate will view the video and may include the following when viewing: school bus operator, bus driver, student, parent and manager of transportation.

3.7.1.4 Once the videocassette has been viewed and the situation dealt with, the principal will return the videocassette to the operator.

3.7.1.5 The operator will erase what has been taped immediately.

3.8 **Pre-school Bus Safety**

3.8.1 A Pre-School Bus Safety program must be conducted by the manager of transportation in concert with the O.P.P. Community Services Officer or the local police in a town school.

3.8.2 The schedule of dates will be drawn up by the manager of transportation.

3.8.3 It is the responsibility of each elementary school principal to:

- (a) Notify and invite the pre-school child and one parent or guardian to the school in order to participate in the program; and
- (b) Arrange to have available in the yard, a school bus or buses complete with bus driver capable of accommodating the pre-schoolers and the adult with each child.

3.9 **Medication, Administration of**

3.9.1 See Administrative Procedure 315 Medication: Oral Administration.

3.10 **Field Trips**

3.10.1 For the safety, well-being and comfort of students on field trips, important consideration shall be given when out-of-classroom excursions are planned. These events are an extension of the classroom and as such, all regular requirements shall be met for supervision of our students.

3.10.2 All supervising individuals must remain with the students during the trip until they are returned to the school and disbanded appropriately.

3.10.3 Only bus contractors who are regular operators for the board should be used. If another contractor is to be considered, the contractor will be required to give the same proof of liability insurance and abide by the same rules and regulations that the board requires for the regular operators. It is important to contact the manager of transportation in these instances. Sufficient lead-time is required to investigate an operator. This operating procedure also applies to the use of highway coaches.

3.10.4 The following requirement for the number of passengers shall be followed. This requirement has been developed with the co-operation of the Bus Operators' Association and complies with Ministry of Transportation guidelines.

- (a) Passenger Loading: Short Trips (being 100 km one way or less)

3.11.12 The contractor or board representative should provide continuous updates to all contacts e.g. school(s), administrative office(s), etc.

3.11.13 Copies of police accident reports are to be submitted to the administrative office.

3.11.14 The contractor will follow up with the board staff to analyse events and the handling of them.

3.12 Kindergarten Pupils

3.12.1 The board does not normally provide transportation for kindergarten students during the noon period of the school day. Principals will schedule kindergarten classes in such a way that no additional costs for home-school transportation are incurred. Special needs requests may be made as provided in Section 2.3 of this procedure.